

PRISONERS OF WAR

In September of 1950 the Rev. Harold Voelkel, ^{Presbyterian missionary,} returned to Korea from Japan as a D.A.C. (Department of Army Civilian) Chaplain, appointed to work among Korean troops that had been integrated into the U. S. Army. After the battle of Seoul while the military gains were being consolidated he visited Inchun where 50,000 North Korean Communist prisoners were held and began a ministry that has been richly rewarding. Without amplifiers, musical instruments, hymn-books or Bibles, meetings were conducted outdoors and the size of the crowds ^{was} ~~were~~ limited only by the range of the speaker's voice. Gospel choruses and Scripture verses were taught and evangelistic sermons preached to which there was a surprising response in view of the atheism with which the Communist troops had been indoctrinated.

Voelkel travelled north to Pyeng Yang with the American Army where North Korean Communist resistance collapsed and nearly 100,000 men were taken prisoner. Temporarily the prisoners were housed in huge warehouses on the far-side of the Tae Tong River and here the Gospel ministry was continued. The Rev. Harry Hill who had come north took over when Voelkel crossed to Hamhung, Hungnam and Wonsan in northeast Korea.

November 1950

It was at this time/that General Mac Arthur optimistically promised the U.S. troops that they would be home by Christmas but instead of a cessation of hostilities a fierce attack was ^{launched} by a quarter-million Chinese "Volunteers" who drove the U.N. Forces south of Seoul. All the POW's, both those in Pyeng Yang and those in Inchun were evacuated to Pusan. Now the Rev. John E. Talmadge of the Southern Presbyterian Mission accepted an appointment as a D.A.C. Chaplain to minister to the POW's and engaged in an effective witness for six months until his mission requested his return.

In the early Spring of 1951 the huge, permanent camp on Kojedo was established for all 140,000 Korean and 19,000 Chinese POW's. Now a vigorous evangelistic program got under way. The American Bible Society furnished 150,000 Scripture portions, the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago sent 500,000 Korean tracts, Bob Pierce's World Vision underwrote the purchase of musical instruments (portable organs, trumpets, trombones, accordians, flutes, harmonicas) for our worship services; and when Bible Schools were begun with daily sessions of three hours he supplied notebooks, pencils, pens, clocks, athletic equipment, etc. Fifteen Bible Schools were organized with a total of 3,800 students. Some 3,000 completed the Swallen Bible Correspondence Course that covers every chapter of the Bible.

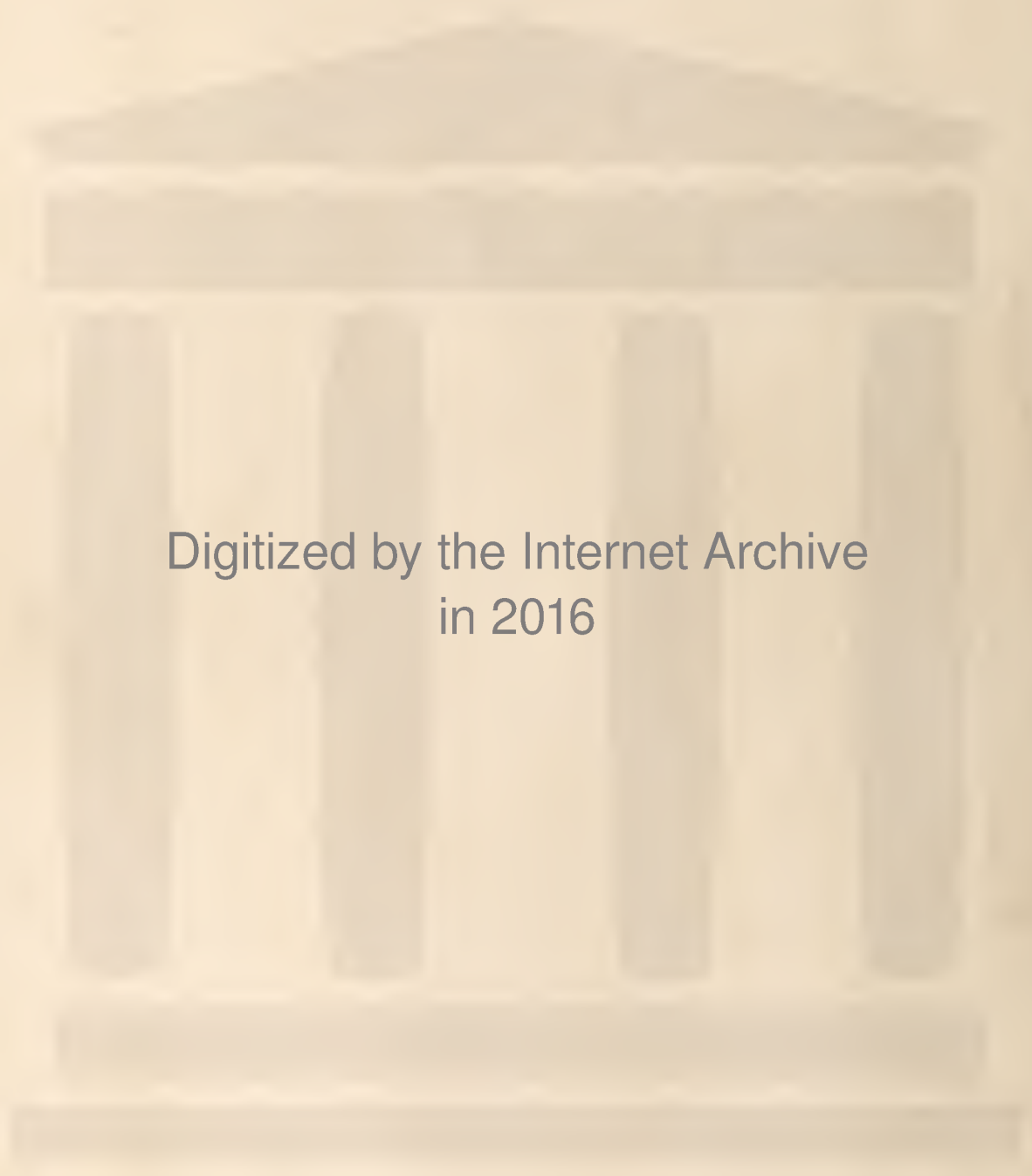
With the development of the work the U.S. Army approved the employment of six ordained Korean pastors as accredited chaplains with freedom to visit throughout the camp. Billy Graham contacted Cecil De Mille and secured the loan of a copy of the film KING OF KINGS which virtually every prisoner saw, and each time the picture was shown even hard-core Reds wept at the Crucifixion scenes. Dr. Graham also raised \$2,000.00 for the work.

The influence of the Church varied from compound to compound. The compounds averaged 10,000 men and in some regular Sunday congregations numbered 1,500 with excellent attendance at the daily daybreak prayer meetings. Some compounds were terrorized by brutal hard-core Communists who on occasion staged uprisings in which as many as twenty or thirty were murdered, often Christians, who blocked their plans to take over control of the compound.

During the last year of the camps, 1952-53, the Rev. Bruce Cummings of the Southern Presbyterian Mission served as a ^{part-time} D.A.C. chaplain on Kojedo, and a number of missionaries, Revs. Harry Hill, E. Otto De Camp and Archibald Campbell gave valiant service in the camps near their respective stations after the Rightist POW's were removed to the mainland from Kojedo Island.

Upon their release in 1953 numbers of the Christian POW's found their way into Bible Institutes, Colleges and Theological Seminaries (Presbyterian, Methodist, Holiness) and to date 169 have graduated from seminary and are serving Christ up and down the land. Largely through the kindness of World Vision (Bob Pierce) tuition of these men has been cared for. Pierce's contribution to the work across the years would total some \$10,000.00.

that tells the POW story
Voelkel's monograph BEHIND BARBED WIRE IN KOREA/with an introduction by Billy Graham sold 50,000 copies. In 1952 the U.S. Army awarded Voelkel the Medal of Freedom, highest civilian decoration, and in 1961 the Korean Government presented him its Welfare Medal in recognition of the POW ministry.



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KOREA WAR - 1950-'53, PRISONER OF WAR CAMP, KUH JE ISLAND



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HAROLD AND GERTRUDE VOELKEL FILES

shambles of a missionary home

a lonely convoy

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In the cold...



Prisoners patiently stand...

CHAPLAIN HAROLD VOELKEL PREACHING TO NORTH KOREAN PRISONERS OF WAR



overflow at a Chapel Tent!



Daybreak prayer - 6:30 A.M.
(8000 attended)

and teaching



Curious, interested, hungry...



**HAROLD VOELKEL, PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONARY TURNED
TEMPORARY CHAPLAIN WITH THE U.S. ARMY, PREACHING**

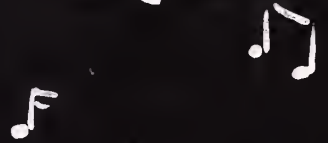
distributing Scriptures

preaching



Choir and organ

MUSIC



... in action!



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Unusual Bible Institute ...
all students are POWs!



S. Korean officers listen
to gospel message...

HAROLD VOELKEL WITH A 14-YEAR-OLD PRISONER



... even the youngest
(a 14-yr.-old prisoner)



Part of a report by Chaplain Harold Voelkel

"With the establishment of the huge POW Camps several of us Dept. of Army Civilian Chaplains were assigned to this ministry which I am confident was Providential and will prove historic.

Despite the limitations under which we worked in those confused days it was possible to gather the prisoners in large, voluntary-attended meetings and bring them the inspiration, comfort and life of the Christian message. With the passing of the months it has been possible to organize the Christians into congregations establish Bible Institutes, and enroll hundreds in a detailed Bible Correspondence Course. Tracts, Scriptures, and Hymnals have been distributed, besides Bible Helps, copies of Pilgrim's Progress, the Catechism, Church Histories, sacred music books, organs, trumpets, accordians, a trombone, and a clarinette. At present we have 20 congregations, 12 Bible Institutes with 1300 students, 600 graduates of the New Testament Bible Correspondence Course, 505 enrolled in the N.T. and 554 in the O.T. Correspondence Course.

Following are other statistics:

Tracts distributed	500,000
Scripture portions	150,000
Four Gospels and Acts	7,000
Hymnals	6,000
New Testaments	3,000
Whole Bibles	800
Note books	5,500
Pencils	7,500

HAMHUNG EVACUATION

With the collapse of North Korean Communist military resistance in the fall of 1950 the hopes of the American troops rose high for a soon return to the U.S. In fact General Mac Arthur promised his men that they "would be home by Christmas". However, in late November the Free World was shocked by the entrance of 250,000 Chinese Communist "Volunteers" into the Korean conflict wrecking the military time-table completely.

The two American divisions, the 3rd and 1st Marine, had to be evacuated to the south a huge operation that over-taxed the resources of both the U.S. Army and Navy. The evacuation of the Korean Christians who would be a primary target for the brutality of the Communists loomed as a desperately urgent problem. At the time the Rev. Harold Voelkel was in Hamhung acting as liaison between the native Christians and the U.S. Army. Panic overtook the populace at the news of the impending Chinese capture of the city and the Christians besieged Voelkel to intercede with the U.S. Forces for help.

The American authorities were sympathetic and desirous of evacuating the Christians but with all U.S. shipping needed for their own troops and all native shipping commandeered for the Korean troops there was no hope of vessels becoming available for civilian use.

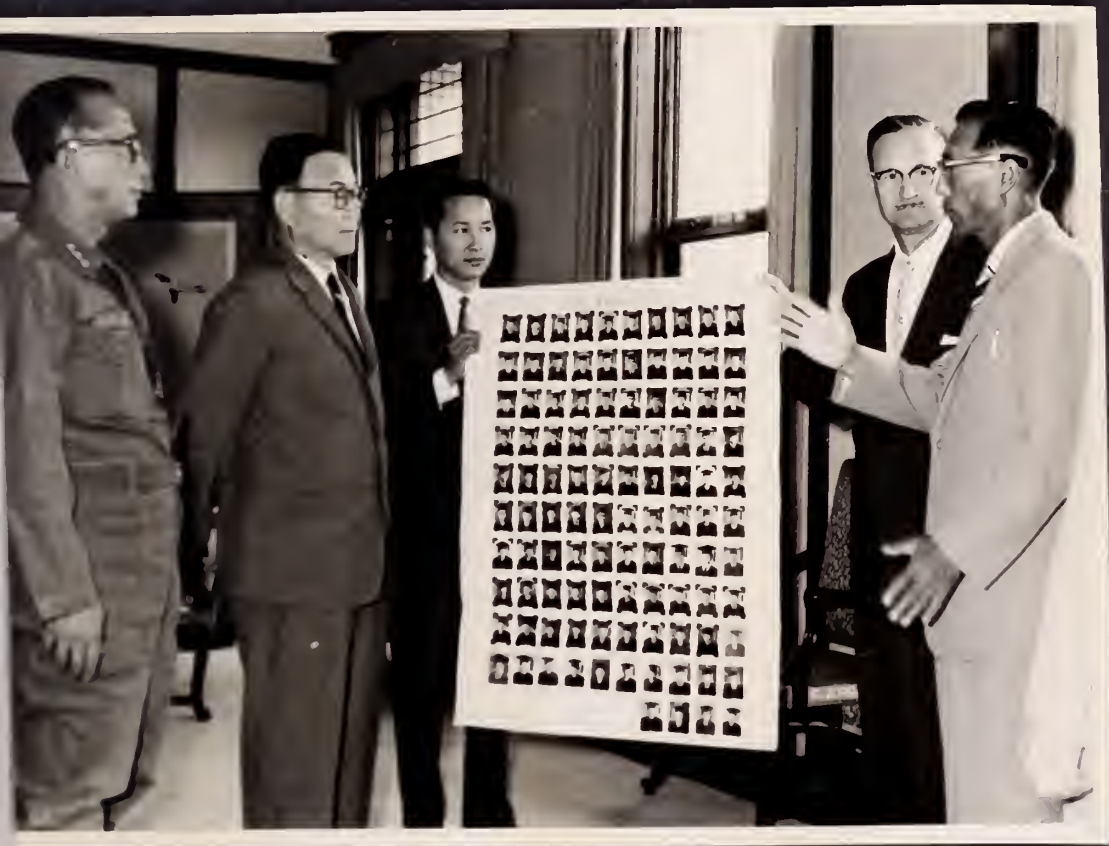
At six o'clock of the evening preceding the morning when the Chinese troops were expected to enter Hamhung the American authorities announced the availability of a train of ten gondola freight cars with a capacity of a hundred persons each to transport the 1,000 Christians to Hung Nam the port from where they would board ships for the south. Snow fell during the cold, dark night of December 15th while Voelkel and a Korean deacon visited the eight congregations of the city (one Roman Catholic) distributing ^{railroad} tickets to the members of the congregations and accompanied the people leaving homes and all their possessions for freedom to the railroad station.

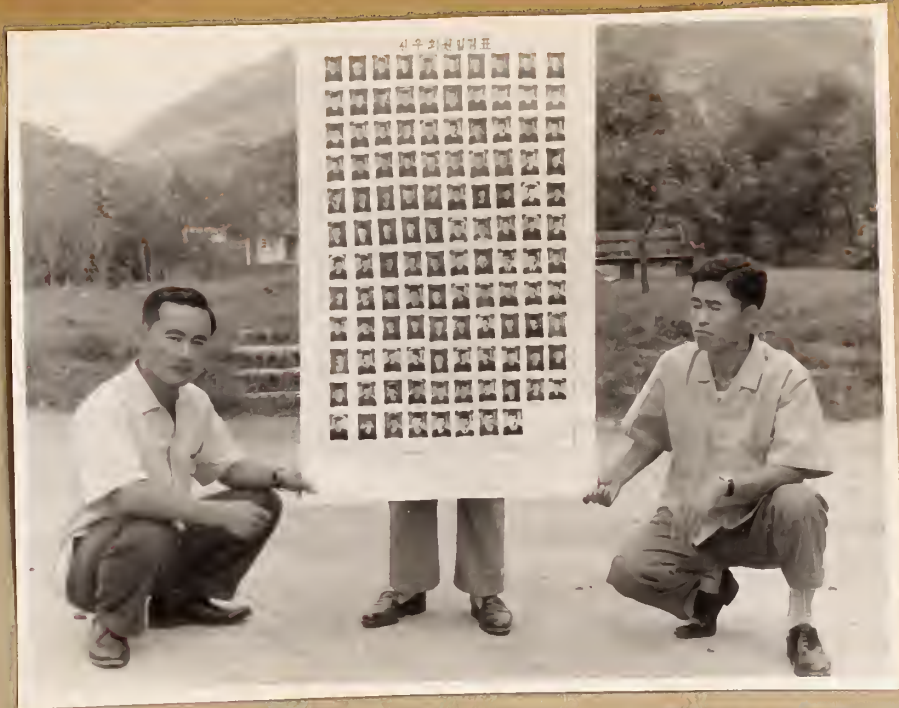
In bitter cold weather on overcrowded L.S.T.'s they sailed, significantly enough, to the island of Kojedo where Voelkel was a little later assigned to work in the POW camps, and there these refugees in their devotion to Christ established 17 churches.

With the capture of Chinese "Volunteers" as Prisoners of War, the Rev. Earl Woodberry who had been working among Chinese in Korea was invited to undertake a ministry among them and was appointed a D.A.C. Chaplain. Woodberry, China born and reared and with several years missionary service there was excellently equipped linguistically for such service. Together with a Korean pastor, Rev. Lee Tae Yung who had served as a missionary of the Korean Church in China, a most efficient evangelistic program was begun in Pusan in the spring of 1951 that included preaching, teaching, films and literature distribution.

Woodberry continued with the POW's as they were successively transferred from Pusan to Kojedo and back to the mainland winning his way into the hearts of the men.

Upon their release at Panmunjun while high officials from the U.N. and Nationalist China were there to greet them, when the prisoners caught sight of their missionary standing on the sidelines they broke ranks and rushed to him called, "Lao Moosa" "Lao Moosa" (Beloved Pastor). Woodberry received a decoration from the U.S. Army and one from Nationalist China presented by Chang Kai Check's son.



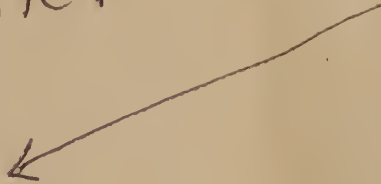


2 former North Korean
Prisoners of War holding
large card of photos of
other former POW's



POW MINISTRY

DEACON WHO
ACOMPANIED ME
AROUND HAM HUNG
GATHERING CHRISTMAS
to BE EVACUATED



Harold
Voelkel



Harold + Gertrude Swallen Voelkel und
Koreen friend



G. Thompson Brown, Harold Voelkel, ?

RECEPTION
AT SEOUL
AIRPORT



middle three: Gertrude and Harold Voelkel and Dr. Herman Kim,
president of Soongsil College



↑
Gertrude Voelkel



Gertrude + Harold Voelkel

Chaplain's Report

KOJEDO PRISONER OF WAR CAMP

March 1951 - April 1952

The huge Kojedo POW Camp was opened in March of 1951 and now with the transfer of large numbers of the prisoners to other locations this seems to be a propitious time to submit a report of our ministry during the past 13 months.

STAFF

Seven Korean pastors, one a POW, and two missionary chaplains have constituted the staff.

MEMBERSHIP

When the camp opened the Protestant constituency totalled 4,261. Now we have a total of 15,062, divided as follows, baptized 2,266; Catechumens 1,571; preparing for the catechumenate 11,225.

CHURCH OFFICERS

Pastor 1; Elders 9; Exhorters 9; Lay Evangelists 18; Deacons 301; Seminary Students 35; Sunday School Teachers 120; total 493.

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE - a detailed, individual study of each book of the Old & New Testament.

Enrolled in the New Testament			6,355
Graduates	"	"	2,162
Enrolled	Old	"	3,428
Graduates	"	"	464

BIBLE INSTITUTES

In May, 1951, we opened the first Institute with 38 students; now we have 15 Institutes with a total of 3,883 students. The semesters continue for three months; the beginning subjects are LIFE OF CHRIST (Gospels), ACTS, CHURCH HISTORY, ENGLISH, MUSIC, and following through the Scriptures as we go along.

BIBLE CONFERENCES

From November 1951 on, Bible Conferences of a week each were held in the different congregations from time to time, teaching FIRST THESSALONIANS, FIRST PETER, FIRST JOHN, SERMON ON MOUNT, JAMES, MATTHEW.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

Each week a preparatory study class is conducted by the Church leaders for all Sunday School Teachers.

*this report covers
the first half of the
ministry*

WORSHIP

WORSHIP is held in each church every Sunday conducted by the Korean and American Chaplains.

Christian Endeavor meetings each Sunday evening, and daily Daybreak prayer meetings are led in turn by different leaders of the congregations.

SACRAMENTS

The Lord's Supper has been celebrated three times, May 6, 1951, October 7, 1951 (World Wide Communion Sunday), and April 13, 1952 (Easter).

On these occasions there were baptisms and admissions to the catechumenate.

	1-Communion	2-Communion	3-Communion
Number baptized	84	202	614
Catechumens	111	465	1,397
Total Communicants	500	1,712	2,317

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

~~642~~ HAVE SIGNIFIED AN INTENTION TO ENTER THE gospel ministry upon their release.

AUDIO-VISUAL

Copies of Moody Bible Institute film GOD OF CREATION and Cecil De Mille's KING OF KINGS (Mr. De Mille's personal gift to the POW's) have been shown to an average of 10,000 men a month. Attendance is limited by the smallness of the one building available in each compound. Stereoptican pictures on THE PRODIGAL SON, PENTECOST, NAAMAN, and JOSEPH are being shown in each compound.

SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED

- 585 Whole Bibles (exceedingly difficult to obtain)
- 5,874 Standard-sized New Testaments
- 10,000 Pocket New Testaments
- 8,000 U.N. Bi-Lingual Hymnals, English-Korean
- 6,201 Four Gospels and Acts
- 181,522 Scripture Portions, Gospels, Proverbs, Psalms, Genesis, Psalms, Sermon on Mount
- 112 English New Testaments
- 48 Commentaries on Matthew (C.R. Erdman - translated)
- 62 " " John "
- 643,320 Tracts
 - 20 Life of Augustine
 - 40 Pilgrim's Progress
 - 20 Book of Christian Martyrs
 - 110 Christian Life
 - 38 Constitution of Korean Presbyterian Church
- 4,474 Manuals of Bible Correspondence Course
- 3,432 Note Books
- 12,194 Pencils
- 216 Fountain Pens
- 74 Brushes - for writing native style
- 161 Bottles Ink

68 Boxes Chalk
155 Combs
15 Bottles paste
150 English-Japanese Concise Dictionaries (far superior to
English-Korean)
14 Watches and clocks
100 Harmonicas
9 Cornets and Trombones
2 Clarinets
9 Organs - portable
6 Basketballs
155 Calendars
1 Mimeograph
28 English Grammars

